

Romaine Quinn

State Representative • Serving the 75th Assembly District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Victories for Rural Health Care in Budget

Madison – Representative Romaine Quinn (R-Rice Lake) said today that the future of health care in rural Wisconsin looks more positive in the next two years, thanks to the passage of budget motions from the Rural Wisconsin Initiative.

The first motion added to the budget, authored by Rep. Quinn, creates a first-of-its-kind training program for Advanced Practice Clinicians, such as advanced practice nurses and physician assistants. The \$500,000 annual matching grant program opens more training positions in rural hospitals, exposing students to the rewards of working in sometimes-overlooked areas. Training in these areas makes students significantly more likely to stay in rural communities, helping to maintain a sustainable health care infrastructure.

The second motion, from Rep. Ed Brooks (R-Reedsburg), expands funding to train allied health professionals. These positions include radiologists, physical therapists, and pharmacy technicians. The motion creates an annual grant of \$500,000 to create training consortia, increasing cooperation between rural health care providers and expanding training opportunities for critical hospital staff.

“The budget provisions that were added on Thursday will mean real improvements for rural residents,” said Rep. Quinn. “The RWI motions that were added to the budget will increase the talent pool of nurses and support staff that keep hospitals running smoothly. Indeed, these staff play larger roles in rural hospitals, where there are fewer doctors. Training these staff in rural areas means they are far more likely to stay in rural areas.”

A third budget motion, supported by Rep. Quinn, funds dementia care specialist positions with county Aging and Disability Resource Centers. The request fully funds 19 Dementia Care Specialist positions in 2017-18, and expands the program to 24 Specialists in 2018-19. Dementia Care Specialists provide resources and support for individuals who have family members affected by dementia, and training to communities to be more accessible to those with the disease.

“I have worked closely with the Barron County ADRC over the last two years, and have had a chance to see the great work they do first-hand,” said Rep. Quinn. “The Dementia Care Specialist program has had a significant positive impact on our district, and I am happy to see that work continue.”

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